39. The media signal capture device of claim 38 wherein the auxiliary data describes attributes of the media signal.

40. The media signal capture device of claim 38 wherein the auxiliary data includes a reference to auxiliary data stored outside the media signal.

41. The media signal capture device of claim 38 wherein the auxiliary data includes authentication data for authenticating the media signal.

42. The media signal capture device of claim 41 wherein the authentication data is derived from the media signal.

43. The media signal capture device of claim 38 including an interface for receiving the auxiliary data from an external device.

44. The media signal capture device of claim 38 including an interface for receiving an operating parameter specifying a type of auxiliary data to associate with the media signal.

45. The media signal capture device of claim 38 including an interface for receiving session parameters that govern operation of the media signal capture device during a session.

46. The media signal capture device of claim 45 wherein at least one of the session parameters instructs the media signal capture device to preclude a user from altering a device setting during the session.

47. The media signal capture device of claim 45 wherein the session parameters specify auxiliary data to be associated with a media signal captured in the device during a session.

48. A media signal capture device including:
a recorder for capturing a media signal;

a processing unit for associating auxiliary data with the media signal; and

an interface for receiving session parameters that govern operation of the media signal capture device during a session.

49. The media signal capture device of claim 48 wherein the session parameters specify auxiliary data to be associated with media signals captured by the recorder during a session.

50. The media signal capture device of claim 48 wherein at least one of the session parameters instructs the media signal capture device to preclude a user from altering a device setting during the session.

51. The media signal capture device of claim 48 wherein a session identifier is steganographically encoded in the media signal or metadata associated with the media signal in the session.

52. A method for associating auxiliary data with a media signal, the method comprising:

extracting a steganographic reference to auxiliary data in the media signal;

querying a metadata database to request the auxiliary data associated with the media signal using the extracted reference to access the auxiliary data in the metadata database; and

receiving the auxiliary data from the database.

53. The method of claim 52 including:

using the auxiliary data received from the database to create a media signal file including the media signal and the auxiliary data.

54. The method of claim 52 including:

sending authentication data to the metadata database to request access to the auxiliary data associated with the media signal.

55. The method of claim 52 including:

sending a request to the metadata database to edit the auxiliary data associated with the media signal.

56. A computer readable medium having software for performing the method of claim 52.

57. A method for associating auxiliary data with a media signal, the method comprising:

maintaining a database of auxiliary data items associated with media signals, each item being associated with a media signal via a reference steganographically encoded in the media signal;

from a requesting application, receiving a request for auxiliary data associated with a media signal, the request including a reference extracted from the media signal;

using the reference to locate the auxiliary data associated with the media signal in the database; and

returning the auxiliary data corresponding to the reference to the requesting application.

58. The method of claim 57 including:

determining whether the requesting application has access rights to the requested auxiliary data.

59. The method of claim 57 including:

determining whether the requesting application has editing rights for the requested auxiliary data.

60. A computer readable medium having software for performing the method of claim 57.

61. A method for associating auxiliary data with a media signal, the method comprising:

maintaining a database of steganographic links and metadata databases associated with the steganographic links;

from a requesting application, receiving a steganographic link extracted from a media signal, the link referencing auxiliary data about the media signal;

using the steganographic link to locate a metadata database that stores the auxiliary data associated with the media signal; and

forwarding the steganographic link to the metadata database that stores the auxiliary data associated with the media signal.

62. A computer readable medium having software for performing the method of claim 61.

63. In a method of associating auxiliary data with a media signal in a media signal processing system, the system including a media signal recorder, a computer, and an interface for communicating between the recorder and the computer, an improvement comprising automatically steganographically encoding media signal data with digital watermark data upon transfer to the computer.

64. The method of claim 63 which includes associating metadata in the recorder with a media signal captured in the recorder, transferring said metadata to the computer with the media signal, and associating said metadata in the computer with the digital watermark.

65. The method of claim 63 in which the digital watermark data permits detection of subsequent media signal alteration.

66. The method of claim 63 in which the encoding is performed by the computer.

67. A method of operating a media signal capture system, the system including a media signal capture device and a distinct computer with a user interface, the method including providing to the media signal capture device from said computer at least one data item to be steganographically encoded in a media signal captured by the media signal capture device, wherein the user interface of the computer is utilized to specify the data item.

68. The method of claim 67 which includes providing a steganographic link to the media signal capture device from the computer.

69. A method of maintaining a transaction history for media signal processing transactions on media signals, the method comprising:

maintaining a transaction history of a media signal stored on a networked device;

in response to receiving a transaction request to process a media signal stored on the networked device, updating the transaction history of the media signal by adding data about the transaction to the transaction history.

70. The method of claim 69 including:

associating the transaction history with the media signal through a link between the media signal and the transaction history.

71. The method of claim 70 wherein the link is a steganographic link embedded in the media signal.--

Respectfully submitted,

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